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MORALE—THE 10TH PRINCIPLE OF WAR
Returning the Art to the Science of War

By

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the Requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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INTRODUCTION

*Morale is the state of mind. It is steadfastness and courage and hope. It is confidence and zeal and loyalty. It is elan, esprit de corps and determination. It is staying power, the spirit which endures to the end—the will to win. With it all things are possible, without it everything else, planning, preparation, production count for naught. General George C. Marshall*¹

Perhaps the hardest aspect of proposing “Morale” as the 10th Principle of War is the requirement to succinctly define what “it” is. After all, the utility of a principle is, by definition, the ability to clearly articulate the meaning, the measure, and the application of said principle with respect to developing a plan or executing an operation.

Webster's Dictionary defines morale as a "moral or mental condition with respect to courage, discipline, confidence, enthusiasm, willingness to endure hardship, etc. within a group, in relation to a group, or within an individual."² But this definition seems to lose some of the power morale is assigned by General Marshall's words—words echoed by General Eisenhower who said that "morale, given rough equality in other things, is supreme on the battlefield."³ And although Generals Marshall and Eisenhower spoke from experience forged during World War II, their thoughts on morale still ring true today.

This paper is not an attempt to relearn a forgotten “truth”—the current United States Army Field Manual on Operations, FM 100-5, emphasizes the continued validity of Generals Marshall’s and Eisenhower’s words, (albeit with the noticeable exclusion of the specific term “morale”), in the intonation that

"[S]trong leaders and trained, dedicated soldiers are the greatest combat multipliers. When opposing forces are nearly equal, the moral qualities of soldiers and leaders—sense of duty, courage, loyalty, and discipline, combined with stamina and skill—provide the decisive edge"⁴

This paper is, however, aimed at re-emphasizing the positive aspects of “morale” to the current and future leaders of our nation’s military. Acknowledgment of the current morale challenges facing all of America’s armed forces, most notably as illustrated by retired

Lt. Gen. Ulmer's recent warning^a that "[T]here're lots of data showing that morale throughout the armed forces is the lowest it's been in a long time,"⁵ does not diminish the consideration of morale as the 10th principle of war—in fact, it serves to increase its importance.

This paper argues that adding "Morale" as the 10th Principle of War will re-inject the *art* of war into an eighty year old "scientific approach" first adopted by the United States War Department in 1921,⁶ and will thereby increase our ability to successfully accomplish *the mission*, in both peace and war. Contrasting this line of reasoning, General Starry contends that "[T]he principles of war thus derived [from a critical historical analysis] are, therefore, a part of the art rather than the science of war."⁷ Conversely, Admiral Brown acknowledges the "art and science" of war, but writes "[T]he principles of war deal with the science of war."⁸

Adoption of morale as the 10th principle will synchronize consideration of its characteristics with those of the nine principles—objective, maneuver, surprise, simplicity, mass, offensive, unity of command, security, and economy of force—currently recognized by the United States armed forces. And, perhaps most importantly, adoption of morale as the 10th principle will serve to constantly require consideration of its attributes in the consciousness of national and military leadership, the experienced warrior, and the green recruit.

This brings us back to the question of "what is morale?" Generals Marshall and Eisenhower described an all-encompassing notion of morale. So too Admiral Brown when he wrote "there are dozens of factors which contribute to morale: confidence in leadership... symbols of organization... 'pomp and ceremony' and 'spit and polish.'"⁹ Gary Jandzinski,^b

^a General Ulmer's comments (*U.S. News & World Report*, May 1, 2000, Vol 128, No 17, p. 40) were in response to queries on the results of a survey he recently led of 12,000 service members

researching the question in 1995, found that the Israeli Defense Force determined morale to be “a supporting factor to performance, rather than the product of other factors.”¹⁰ He also referenced Anthony Kellet’s work, *Combat Motivation: The Behavior of Soldiers in Battle*, when he quoted Kellet’s view that “cohesion denotes the feelings of belonging to [a small group] ...[based on] common experience, interdependence, and shared...values,” while “[E]sprit denotes feelings of pride, unity of purpose, and adherence to an ideal...[generally when applied] to larger units with more formal boundaries.”¹¹ Major K.L. Thornton, writing for the Canadian Forces Command and Staff College, cites leadership, discipline, self-respect, and comradeship^c as the “four basic factors which foster high morale.”¹² He also extracted his “preferred” definition of morale from John Baynes 1967 book, *Morale: A Study of Men and Courage*. Baynes defines morale as

a quality of mind and spirit which combines courage, self-discipline, and endurance. It springs from infinitely varying and sometimes contradictory sources, but is easily recognizable, having as its hall-marks cheerfulness and unselfishness. In time of peace good morale is developed by sound training and the fostering of “esprit de corps.” In time of war, it manifests itself in the soldier’s absolute determination to do his duty to the best of his ability in any circumstances. At its highest peak it is seen as an individual’s readiness to accept his fate willingly, even to the point of death, and to refuse all roads that lead to safety at the price of conscience.¹³

Baynes definition well captures the essence of the discussion on morale and is favored because it addresses both peace and war, and the higher concept of “duty.” The concept of morale as the 10th principle is founded, then, in a compendium of Baynes

^b Jandzinski wrote a thesis on the “determinants of high performance involving USAF aircraft maintenance personnel in rear-echelon contingency bases during Desert Shield and Desert Storm.” (Abstract for “Identifying Situational Factors Contributing to Combat Performance During Desert Shield and Desert Storm”)

^c See also Ronald E. Wildermuth’s paper, “Morale: A Misconception or a Principle of War?” (unpublished research paper, Naval War College, 25 June 1982) for a discussion on the factors of primary group ties, unit esprit, belief in cause, and leadership.

writings, Marshall's and Eisenhower's quotes, and Kellet's differentiation of cohesion and esprit, thereby establishing "morale" in a hierarchical model definition.

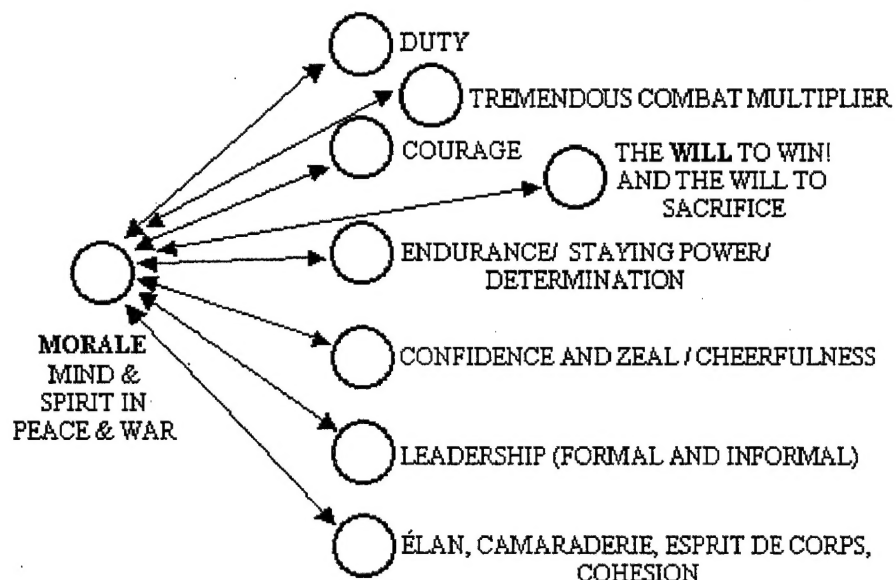


Figure 1. Morale in the Hierarchical Model

Having established a definition of morale--at least within the bounds of this paper-- why should it be a principle of war? Why are there only nine principles of war, and why these specific nine? In what instances has morale been a principle of war? The answers to these questions, and associated discussion, will be used to build the framework¹⁴ for the argument to include morale as the 10th principle.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRINCIPLES

In his seminal work, *The Quest for Victory: The History of the Principles of War*, Dr. John Alger defines *principle* as "a fundamental truth that is professed as a guide to action" with the focus of his book being "the principles that guide commanders toward success when their unit is confronted by a comparably armed and relatively equal foe."¹⁵ It is interesting to note that Dr. Alger's words bear a striking similarity to those of General Eisenhower, with respect to gaining the advantage when facing an "equal" enemy. Also of interest are General

Kroesen's words in the foreword to *The Quest for Victory*—"I have," he wrote, "long believed that there should be a tenth modern principle that explains that war is an art, not a science."¹⁶ Implied in General Kroesen's words is the observation that the current principles of war are more scientific in nature, more Jomini than Clausewitz, and definitely far more scientific than Sun Tzu envisioned in his *Art of War*. To understand the environment in which the "modern" principles were initially adopted, a brief examination from the 1920s is required.

The world was still reeling from a World War that had resulted in millions of casualties. The realization that these losses could not again be borne affected a great study of war in the short term, and would define the strategy of the next world war. It was assumed that the "World War...had been fought inefficiently and thus inconclusively because it had not been fought 'scientifically' enough."¹⁷ Professor Weigley, in *The American Way of War*, contends that in America, the feeling was that

The proper application of science to the study of war ought to reveal universally applicable principles of war. American methods of warmaking in particular, military writers had begun to say even before the Great War, were inefficient because the American armed forces lacked unity of doctrine, unity of acceptance of basic military principles.¹⁸

The principles adopted by the Army in the 1921 publication of *War Department Training Regulations No. 10-5*¹⁹ are apparently the result of a solo effort on the part of United States Army Major Hjalmar Erickson who, while overseas, embraced the writings of J.F.C. Fuller. One of the more visionary military writers of the early 20th Century, John Frederick Charles Fuller, Royal Army (U.K.), had, as early as 1916, been writing on the concept of Principles of War, in addition to being one of the first to grasp the revolutionary nature of armored warfare. With the exception of adding "simplicity," the Erickson list was exactly as proposed by Fuller.²⁰ As Dr. Alger chronicles in *Quest for Victory*, the nine

principles of war recognized by the United States today are the same “eight plus one” that Erickson returned with from Europe after WW I, taught at the Army War College, and subsequently sponsored in *Training Regulation 10-5*—with no documented professional debate or higher headquarters permission. And although subject to varying degrees of debate over the ensuing 80 years, with corresponding disappearance and reappearance of the principles, these same original principles are now fully accepted by the United States military services—even though the nation of their birth, the United Kingdom^d, has digressed from the Fuller list, which they adopted in 1920.²¹

In 1920, just prior to the first appearance of the “modern” principles of war in a United States Army publication, Major Arthur Harrison Miller published the book *Leadership*,^e which was oriented to the American experience of the First World War. In accordance with the practice of the times, Major Miller applied “scientific logic” to link morale with leadership—“[T]he combination might be likened to the closed electric circuit, morale being the current--the powerful electromotive-force, and leadership the conductor which guides and transmits this force to the motor.”²² It is possible that this work, sanctioned²³ by Major General Leonard Wood—both a former commander of the Rough Riders and former Army Chief of Staff²⁴—served to solidify that link between leadership and morale in the minds of those army leaders that remained in the Service after World War One. Miller purposely oriented his definition of leadership to incorporate the tenets of morale, resulting in the observation (emphasis in original) that

^d See Alger, p. 150-152. Post WW II, Field Marshall Montgomery drove the adoption of 10 principles: Administration, Maintenance of Morale, Selection and Maintenance of the Aim, Flexibility, Economy of Effort, Concentration of Force, Offensive Action, Surprise, Security, and Co-operation.

^e The full title of Miller’s book is *Leadership—A Study and Discussion of the Qualities Most to be Desired in an Officer, and of the General Phases of Leadership which have a Direct Bearing on the Attaining of High Morale and the Successful Management of Men.*

Leadership is briefly defined in the dictionary as "the ability to lead." It might be defined broadly from a military point of view *as the science of creating and maintaining high morale and of directing it, through the acts of men to the achieving of a definite purpose or result.* Basically, this means that the ability and will of a leader must be concentrated upon the task of producing an efficient organization, possessing high morale and quickly responsive to his every order.²⁵

The sustained, significant impact of Miller's definition is illustrated by the fact that his words were mirrored some 73 years later in FM 100-5 with the following treatise on the "Human Dimension" of the Army, where leaders

successfully lead [soldiers] through danger, mold and protect their spirit, and channel their energies toward mission accomplishment...[leaders] build units and teams that have the courage to overcome odds to accomplish the mission and the determination to press on to victory.²⁶

This definition of leadership leads us to the "currently accepted" model of morale, where it is but one of many areas guided, produced, or otherwise affected by leadership.

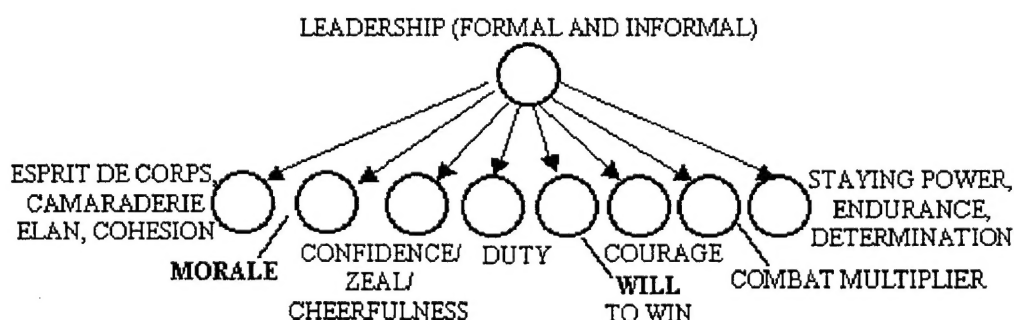


Figure 2. Morale as a Product of Leadership.

That Miller's 1920 linking of leadership and morale might have negated morale from consideration as a principle of war is problematic—there was no such debate. Recall that Erickson, an apparent disciple of J.F.C. Fuller, "single-handedly" introduced the Principles of War into the lexicon of the 20th Century United States Army.

But just as the United States armed forces have debated the meaning of their individual list of principles of war over the past 80 years, so too can they debate Major Erickson's decision on the composition of that list. So too can be debated Miller's 1920

relationship of morale and leadership—where morale and leadership form an almost inseparable bond in which leadership is the more powerful element and morale is relegated to be a “subset of leadership.”

The preceding background has been developed with the intent of serving as a catalyst for debate by the 21st Century United States military on an 80-year old statement of “scientific fact.” Leadership and morale are definitely bonded—but the validity of the “fact,” (that leadership and morale create a bond so strong that individual elements can not be considered as separate entities), should be questioned. That is, debate can and should take place on the proposition that morale be considered as a separate Principle of War.

The fact is that Miller felt that “[O]f the two morale is by far the more necessary. For men infused with high morale will follow a poor or indifferent leader even through adversity...but not without loss of power.”²⁷ Miller's “link” is a point of departure from which debate can begin, just as the continued relevancy and composition of Erickson's chosen nine have been debated.

In reality, the evolution of America's distinct military services has resulted in adaptation of the nine principles to meet individual service, and, in the case of United States Special Operations Command, unique joint requirements. Additionally, the emergence of the genre of conflict known as Military Operations Other Than War, or MOOTW, has produced its own set of principles. This willingness to allow a considerable degree of flexibility bodes well for consideration of a 10th principle.

THE JOINT STAFF, THE SERVICES, AND THE PRINCIPLES

Joint Pub 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, defines the principles of war as a “guide [to] warfighting at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. They are the enduring

bedrock of US military doctrine.”²⁸ The specific definitions of these principles, are recommended within the Joint Community to be used for everything from deliberate planning to crisis action course of action analysis.

But the specific definitions are not so important (for the purpose of this discussion) as the “expansions”^f each Service and USSOCOM have levied on those definitions. The expansions mold the principles to incorporate tenets of each Service doctrine. To illustrate, USSOCOM Pub 1 introduces the principles with the words

The principles of war provide general guidance for the conduct of war at all levels. The principles are not inviolable, but have proven valid through centuries of war, under widely varying conditions. In some circumstances, a leader or planner will violate a principle of war knowingly—but the reasons and the risk involved must be clearly understood... The principles of war apply to SOF as they apply to conventional forces; *in some cases, however, the principles have a different meaning, emphasis, or application to special operations,*^g primarily because SOF seldom work with large formations and sizeable reserves.²⁹

Air Force Doctrine Document 1 introduces the principles of war with the guidance that “airmen... must fully understand them as they pertain to air and space forces... [T]he art of developing air and space strategies depends upon the airman’s ability to view these principles from an aerial perspective and integrate their application with the airman’s fundamentals.”³⁰ While U.S. Army FM 100-5, Operations, calls the principles “the enduring bedrock of Army doctrine” and notes that “[t]he original principles adopted by the Army, although slightly revised, have withstood the test of time.”³¹

A new set of “principles” has recently been developed in response to the genre of military action defined as “military operations other than war,” or MOOTW. Joint Pub 3-07, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, expands the discussion of these six

^f Some of which are included in Appendix A of this paper.

^g Emphasis added by the author for the purpose of illustrating a divergence from a set definition.

new principles begun in Joint Pub 3-0. The authors of Joint Pub 3-07 wrote that “[W]hile the first three of these principles are derived from the principles of war, the remaining three are MOOTW-specific.”³² Actually, only “objective” retains the same definition as that used in the “conventional” principles of war.^h And just as with the “conventional” principles, USSOCOM has expanded the Joint Staff definitions of the MOOTW principles to capture the capabilities that SOF affords the Joint Force Commander, or other designated authority.

Clearly, the principles are not sacrosanct, as each service or joint command has modified or expanded the Joint Staff definition to emphasize its particular culture or capability. And to meet a perceived need, the Joint Staff has approved an entirely new set of principles to assist the armed forces in dealing with the differing situations they face when responding to MOOTW. It would be safe to conclude that the principles of war adopted by the United States, even though “withstanding the test of time,” can and should be questioned, modified, and even expanded to meet the needs of the armed forces. So how do other nations deal with the principles of war?

OTHER NATIONS AND THE PRINCIPLES

A survey on the principles of war, with a specific emphasis on the principle of “morale,” was createdⁱ and delivered to each of the International Officers attending the Naval Command College during the 1999-2000 school year. Responses were received from 25 of the 34 officers—many of whom not only provided insight into their particular nation’s

^h Compare Joint Pub 3-0 definitions on V-2 and A-1, where, in both cases, Objective is defined as “Direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective.”

ⁱ The author generated this survey as part of his initial research. The format of the survey can be viewed in Appendix B of this paper.

military, but who also recommended additional avenues for research.^j Of the 25 responses, ten nations recognized morale as a principle of war, while an additional two indicated orientation more in line with current United States thinking, and identified the “principle” of morale as being not separate, but resident in two other principles.

Of this latter category, one officer noted that “morale is included in the first principle which is defined as ‘First (or main) objective.’” Also paralleling the United States perspective was the observation that “morale is accepted as a force multiplier, (not a principle of war), in my country.” This observation tends to counter the hierarchical definition proposed for morale earlier in this paper (Fig. 1), with the argument that “morale is a subset of many factors,” among them, combat capability (Fig. 2). But the fact remains that many other nations do feel that morale is significant enough to warrant identification as a separate principle of war.

The brief definitions from the officers of those nations that do consider morale a principle of war are contained in Appendix C. They are included to demonstrate the intensity with which they are perceived, indicating that morale may indeed be a “combat multiplier.” They also illustrate that, as exists with the differing services’ expanded discussion on the principles, many nations recognize the worth of morale as a principle, but interpret the concept differently.

But even for those nations that have established morale as a principle of war, contemporary challenges facing today’s military forces have compelled officers to request either a new, or an expanded definition of that principle. These challenges are as applicable

^j Canadian officer Commander Richard Bergeron was particularly helpful in leading the author to Commodore C.J.S. Craig’s essay, “Command Priorities in War—Time to Change Our Principles.”

(or perhaps even more so) to operations conducted by the United States, as they are to operations conducted by other nations.

Writing in 1992, Commodore C.J.S. Craig recommended the United Kingdom adapt its current principles to account for exigencies that had arisen in the “47 years since they were approved by the Chiefs of Staff at the end of World War II.”³³ Specifically relating to this paper, the Commodore recommended the examination of the current principle of “Maintenance of Morale” to compensate for the increasing impact posed by “media coverage” and “[perceived] casualty [aversion] on the conduct of an operation.”³⁴

Based on late 20th Century, and early 21st Century data, both the topic of “media coverage” and the topic of “casualty aversion” continue to rise in importance with respect to potential operations by the United States. Craig’s arguments highlight the merit of defining “morale” by the hierarchical model (Fig. 1), (i.e., the United States should consider the positive or negative affect on morale that a potential operation will have based on media coverage or perceived casualty aversion.), vice defining morale as a “subset of leadership” (Fig. 2) because “leadership” may not be afforded the opportunity for influence on either the media, or the subject of casualty aversion.

WHY ADD MORALE AS THE 10TH PRINCIPLE?

*An undue deference to the principles of war is objectionable. It acts as a substitute for thinking, and any substitute for thinking is likely to be a bad substitute.*³⁵ Bernard Brodie

The answer to this question is threefold. The first reason is that the principles of war *are* used as a “point of departure,” or as “checks and balances” when operations are planned or conducted. Given this fact, including a principle (any principle) in the accepted list will ensure it is at least considered. The second reason responds to Bernard Brodie’s warning—it causes one to think, especially when facing so daunting a concept as morale which, if one

embraces the definition proposed in this paper, includes a myriad of factors. Finally, as will be addressed in this next section, the history of war, and in particular, the warfare of the 20th Century, is replete with examples where the factors which compose morale are sometimes the only reason man fights.

Morale is not a super weapon, guaranteed against all odds. General Sir Peter de la Billiere, the British Forces Commander during Desert Storm, recognized and appreciated the limits of morale. As Commander of 22 SAS, he required the reading of Lord Moran's *Anatomy of Courage*.³⁶ Lord Moran, Prime Minister Winston Churchill's personal physician, chronicled his experiences at the front in the carnage of WW I trench warfare. From this experience, he arrived at the conclusion that there is only so deep a well from which man can draw upon during the stress of combat. United States General S.L.A. Marshall^k captured the same "truth" in *Men Against Fire*—"...morale in combat is never a steady current of force but a rapidly oscillating wave whose variations are both immeasurable and unpredictable."³⁷ Not only a commander, but a nation, should appreciate this fact and take the necessary steps to limit the severity and duration of those "valleys" when morale sinks, so as to minimize the degradation of combat capability. To better understand the factors affecting the morale "wave," a brief examination of some of those factors is warranted.

A great deal of research has been conducted on the characteristics and influences on the factors that form morale. As previously noted in this paper, Canadian Forces Major K.L. Thornton keyed on leadership, discipline, self-respect, and comradeship, while United States Navy Lieutenant Commander Wildermuth examined primary group ties, unit esprit, belief in

^k General Marshall was Historian of the European Theater of Operations, responsible for capturing lessons learned, recording historical data, and conducting on-scene studies during combat operations in both the European, and after VE Day, the Pacific Theaters of Operations during WW II. *Men Against Fire* was written after his retirement to capture the wealth of knowledge he had gleaned from his WW II work.

cause, and leadership. Dr Glenn Russell, in his 1998 "No More Principles of War?" essay elected to use Field Marshal Sir William Slim's list of "spiritual, intellectual, and material."³⁸ Within the limited scope of this paper, analyzing the factors of *will power (determination)*, *cohesion* (from Kellet's definition), and *just cause* will expand an understanding of morale's influence.

On the subject of will power, Lord Moran wrote that

there is one attribute without which no man can control his fellows—will power... In peace a soldier's will is scarcely tested, even self-discipline—the dedication of life to one purpose—is less common than in other professions. So he is put to the final test of war without the necessary self-confidence that he will meet the calls made upon him. ...a¹ *lost battle is a battle that one believes lost.*³⁹

As Eisenhower wrote, things being *relatively* equal, [good] morale will win...and conversely (one can conclude) poor morale will lose. This same conclusion was emphasized by Colonel Theodore Gatchel, (USMC, Ret.) in his 1985 article, "Can a Battle be Lost in the Mind of the Commander?" Col. Gatchel chronicles the experiences of a New Zealand battalion and a German battalion in the fight for Hill 107 during the battle for Crete in WW II. The "teaching point" of the article, that "[F]irst, we must somehow develop in our own commanders' minds the perception that we can fight [our strongest adversary] and win,"⁴⁰ still rings true today.

The requirement that will power has to be developed was also realized by Britain's 22 SAS, an organization renowned for its tough selection process. In *Who Dares Wins*, Tony Geraghty provides an in-depth look at the selection process, capturing "facts" that are applicable to the military of the United States:

¹ Emphasis added by author.

...The emphasis of basic selection has turned away from an [entice candidates to quit during selection] approach, towards a positive incentive to succeed.... it reflected a change in the nature of British society itself. The young men who volunteered for SAS service after the late 1960s were no less fit or courageous than their predecessors, but they had grown up in an environment in which hardship and rejection were less familiar, and...more likely to demoralize. The SAS discovered that the generation of the 1980s had to be educated in the ways of adversity before it could begin to learn to cope with them.⁴¹

Kellett's definition of cohesion (common experience, interdependence, shared...values) will serve as a frame of reference, from which will be viewed the experience of war. For the war fighter, cohesion takes on a whole new meaning. For Medal of Honor recipient Colonel Bob Howard, that meaning was "kind of hard to put into words, but it's like having somebody that you love. If you served [in Studies and Observation Group] and you were willing to die, you wanted to have a person there you would not mind dying for or dying with. A lot of people don't understand that."⁴² Howard's reflections were echoed by General Hal Moore and Joe Galloway in *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young*, who wrote

Another and far more transcendent love came to us unbidden on the battlefields, as it does on every battlefield in every war man has ever fought. We discovered in that depressing, hellish place, where death was our constant companion, that we loved each other. We killed for each other, we died for each other, and we wept for each other. And in time we came to love each other as brothers.⁴³

And that same sentiment runs through the 1993 battle in Mogadishu, captured by Bowden in *Black Hawk Down*. That sentiment, illustrated here with a single quote, "Howe was surprised to still be alive. The thought of heading straight back out into the fight scared him, but the fear was nothing next to the loyalty he felt to the men stranded in the city,"⁴⁴ was echoed throughout the book, and demonstrates the tremendous impact of unit cohesion. As General Marshall wrote, "[B]attle morale comes from unity more than from all else and it will rise or fall in the measure that unity is felt by the ranks."⁴⁵

Finally, the factor of "just cause." As with cohesion, the concept of fighting for a just cause, a higher calling, transcends history. It has been the rallying cry that countless generations have followed to war. It tore the United States apart during the Civil War...and again during Vietnam, but solidified the resolve of the nation during WW II and the Gulf War. Our potential for involvement in military operations significantly increases when the American people perceive the need for action to "right some wrong." It served as the basis for the operation code name America employed in 1989—"Operation Just Cause" in Panama—and became the descriptive reason ("just cause") for Desert Shield/Desert Storm. A "just cause" (vice important national interests) was cited as the reason for intervening in Kosovo, as well as a myriad of humanitarian operations around the globe. In short, the "cause," the knowledge that one's life is being placed in harm's way for a noble reason, is second only to cohesion for increasing or sustaining morale.

MORALE AS A DE FACTO PRINCIPLE OF WAR

One of the reasons for the outstanding morale of the U.S. crewmembers was that in the event they were downed, they knew that every possible effort would be made to rescue them. This confidence was a vital factor in maintaining the esprit of air units.

*Military Assistance Command Vietnam, Command History*⁴⁶

"Morale" is already a principle of war, in everything but name. The fact that missions will be launched to rescue downed crewmembers, beleaguered outposts, and captured Prisoners of War, is inculcated in American military culture and American society. The defense of Khe Sanh, and the herculean resupply efforts afforded that besieged encampment are legendary. Legend was also built on the operation to rescue a single flyer, whose call sign, *Bat 21*, was synonymous with the level of effort that will be expended to save a life. As Darrell Whitcomb chronicled in his book *The Rescue of Bat 21*, Lt. Gen. David Vesely, USAF, said at the internment of the recovered remains of the crew of Jolly Green 67 (lost

during the Bat 21 Bravo rescue mission), “All of us who have flown in harm’s way know what a difference it makes to believe that every effort will be made to rescue us if we are down. In Southeast Asia, our rescue people saved thousands of lives and encouraged all of us who were there.”⁴⁷

The mission to rescue American prisoners held in Son Tay was viewed by the prisoners as a success, even though not a single American was freed. Ed Martin, who, as a POW in another camp viewed the distant operation, recalled “Instinctively [I knew] what was up. [I] knew that Son Tay was empty; but that didn’t really matter, [I told myself]. America cared. [I had my] best night’s sleep in three years.”⁴⁸ And the following of the “Ranger Creed,” a creed that would not allow soldier’s to leave behind their dead,⁴⁹ may have resulted in a change in national policy in Somalia, but it also strengthened the resolve of a nation.

CONCLUSION

The unfailing formula for production of morale is patriotism, self-respect, discipline, and self-confidence within a military unit, joined with fair treatment and merited appreciation from without. It cannot be produced by pampering or coddling an army, and is not necessarily destroyed by hardship, danger, or even calamity. Though it can survive and develop in adversity that comes as an inescapable incident of service, it will quickly wither and die if soldiers come to believe themselves the victims of indifference or injustice on the part of their government, or of ignorance, personal ambition, or ineptitude on the part of their military leaders.

*General Douglas MacArthur*⁵⁰

That morale and leadership share a common bond is undisputed, but that bond does not negate the study of each as a separate entity—even to the extent that “Morale” rises to the status of a United States military-recognized Principle of War. Leaders must lead with the “head” as well as the “heart,” and adoption of morale as the 10th principle would not preclude commanders from making decisions or taking actions which may be perceived as negatively affecting morale. Consideration of morale is not now intended, nor should it ever be intended to override the tough decisions required of a leader to ensure *successful mission*

accomplishment. To revisit a previously cited quote from USSOCOM Pub 1, “[I]n some circumstances, a leader or planner will violate a principle of war knowingly—but the reasons and the risk involved must be clearly understood.”

Why morale as a principle? Adoption of morale as the 10th Principle of War will ensure it is encouraged, considered, dissected and discussed from boot camp to retirement. Adoption will ensure those within the military, and within our civilian leadership understand its import, even though, as Brodie observed, “the principles of war are really common-sense propositions, most of them apply equally to other pursuits in life, including some which at first glance seem to be pretty far removed from war.”⁵¹ But the main reason to adopt morale as the 10th Principle of War is because, as General Marshall said, “with it all things are possible.”

APPENDIX A

The Principles of War

The Principles of War, and selected service “expansions” are taken from Joint Pub 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, pages A-1 to A-3, Air Force Doctrine Document 1, pages 12 to 21, FM100-5 Operations, pages 2-4 to 2-6, and USSOCOM Pub 1, Special Operations in Peace and War, pages 4-5 to 4-11, respectively. This is not an “all encompassing” list of “expansions”—refer to the respective source documents for additional ideas.

Objective: The purpose of the objective is to direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective.

AFDD 1 From an airman’s perspective, then, the principle of the objective shapes priorities to allow air and space forces to concentrate on theater or campaign priorities and seeks to avoid the siphoning of force elements to fragmented objectives.

FM 100-5 The ultimate military purpose of war is the destruction of the enemy’s armed forces and will to fight. The linkage, therefore, between objectives at all levels of war is crucial; each operation must contribute to the ultimate strategic aim.

USSOCOM Pub 1 SOF should be assigned operational or strategic objectives that support the campaign plan. Direct special operations are generally targeted on a single, specific objective to allow small forces to exploit a key, specific enemy weakness. Planners must avoid adding secondary objectives to SOF missions, for this can stretch an already limited force to the danger point. Determining SOF objectives requires a careful balancing of risk versus gain and a clear understanding of both the capabilities and limitations of SOF.

Offensive: The purpose of an offensive action is to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative.

AFDD 1 Although all military forces have offensive capabilities, airpower’s ability to mass and maneuver and its ability to operate at the tactical, operational, or strategic levels of warfare—or to simultaneously operate at all levels—provide JFCs a resource with global presence to directly and almost immediately seize the initiative.

FM 100-5 Offensive action is the most effective and decisive way to attain a clearly defined common objective. Offensive operations are the means by which a military force seizes and holds the initiative...an offensive spirit must therefore be inherent in the conduct of all defensive operations.

USSOCOM Pub 1 SOF must have the initiative to offset overall enemy superiority in both size and firepower. SOF must retain the initiative through careful target selection, innovative approaches to reach and depart the target areas, aggressive action, and the ability to take new action more quickly than the enemy can react.

Mass: The purpose of mass is to concentrate the effects of combat power at the place and time to achieve decisive results.

AFDD 1 The speed, range, and flexibility of air forces—complemented by the accuracy and lethality of precision weapons and advances in command, control, and information gathering technologies—allow them to achieve mass faster than surface forces. Today, a single precision weapon that is targeted using superior battlespace awareness can often cause the destructive effect that in the past took hundreds of bombs.

FM 100-5 Synchronizing all elements of combat power where they will have decisive effect on an enemy force in a short period of time is to achieve mass. To mass is to hit the enemy with a closed fist, not poke at him with fingers of an open hand.

USSOCOM Pub 1 Mass is considered in relation to the specific enemy forces to be attacked in the target area (including reinforcements), not the entire enemy force in the sector of operations. SOF have finite resources and must concentrate their combat power at the decisive time and place for each specific objective, accomplish the mission within an acceptable span of time (often determined by the enemy’s ability to react), and then disperse before the enemy can concentrate and counter SOF moves.

Economy of Force: The purpose of the economy of force is to allocate minimum essential combat power to secondary efforts.

AFDD 1 This principle...responds precisely to the greatest vulnerability of air and space power employment: the misuse or misdirection of air and space power, which can reduce its contribution even more than enemy action.

FM 100-5 Economy of force is the judicious employment and distribution of forces. No part of the force should ever be left without purpose.

USSOCOM Pub 1 More than other forces, SOF cannot employ their limited resources on secondary or non-essential tasks.

Maneuver: The purpose of maneuver is to place the enemy in a position of disadvantage through the flexible application of combat power.

AFDD 1 Air and space power's ability to conduct maneuver is not only a product of its speed and range, but also flows from its flexibility and versatility during the planning and execution of operations. The ability to integrate a force quickly and to strike directly at an adversary's strategic or operational center of gravity (COG) is a key theme of air and space power's maneuver advantage.

FM 100-5 Maneuver is the movement of forces in relation to the enemy to gain positional advantage. It is used to exploit success, to preserve freedom of action, and to reduce vulnerability.

USSOCOM Pub 1 Direct special operations use maneuver to exploit enemy vulnerabilities in order to infiltrate and exfiltrate hostile and denied areas, and to conduct operations at unexpected times and places to strike critical enemy vulnerabilities in unanticipated ways. Maneuver is essential to strike the enemy where and when he is most vulnerable, and then to disperse to avoid his strengths.

Unity of Command: The purpose of unity of command is to ensure unity of effort under one responsible commander for every objective.

AFDD 1 Theater and global ranging capabilities impose theater and global responsibilities, which can be discharged only through the integrating function of centralized command under an airman.

FM 100-5 At all levels of war, employment of military forces in a manner that masses combat power toward a common objective requires unity of command and unity of effort.

USSOCOM Pub 1 Normally, all special operations units – less psychological operations and civil affairs – fall under the command of a single joint force special operations component commander (JFSOCC), who works directly for the JFC and ensures that all special operations support the JFC campaign.

Security: The purpose of security is to never permit the enemy to acquire unexpected advantage.

AFDD 1 Security embraces not only physical security, but also security of the information medium. Whoever has the best ability to gain, defend, exploit, and attack information, and deny the same capabilities to an opponent, has a distinct strategic advantage. The instantaneous global reach of modern information systems is as vital to the Air Force's strategic perspective as any air or space weapon.

FM 100-5 Security results from the measures taken by a commander to protect his forces. Risk is inherent in war; however, commanders must not be overly cautious.

USSOCOM Pub 1 Security is of paramount importance to SOF, especially during operations in denied areas. Special operations planning staffs normally are small and compartmented. Inadequate security may compromise a mission, but excessive security may cause the mission to fail for lack of coordination.

Surprise: The purpose of surprise is to strike the enemy at a time or place or in a manner for which it is unprepared.

AFDD 1 Air- and space-based ISR systems enhance the ability to achieve surprise by providing information superiority. When combined with stealthy and information technologies, air and space forces today can provide shock and surprise without unnecessarily exposing massed friendly forces. The rapid global reach

of airpower also allows surface forces to reach foreign destinations quickly, thus seizing the initiative through surprise.

FM 100-5 Surprise can decisively shift the balance of combat power. Surprise can be in tempo, size of force, direction or location of main effort, and timing. Deception can aid the probability of achieving surprise.

USSOCOM Pub 1 Surprise is the *sine qua non* of direct special operations, and often is the key that allows SOF to achieve relative superiority.

Simplicity: The purpose of simplicity is to prepare clear, uncomplicated plans and concise orders to ensure thorough understanding.

AFDD 1 The premise that airmen work for airmen and that the senior airman (the commander of Air Force forces) works for the JFC is central to simplicity.

FM 100-5 Simplicity in plans allows better understanding and troop leading at all echelons and permits branches and sequels to be more easily understood and executed.

USSOCOM Pub 1 The plans and procedures that drive employment must be simple and direct in order to facilitate understanding, withstand the stress of operational environments, and adapt rapidly to changing situations.

APPENDIX B

Survey

MEMORANDUM FOR _____, Seminar _____

FROM: Lt Col Frank J. Kisner, NWC Class, Seminar 11

SUBJECT: Survey on "Principles of War"

26 March, 2000

1. I am currently conducting research for my selected Joint Military Operations Research Paper topic, "Morale—the 10th Principle of War." As part of my research, I would like to draw on the expertise resident in the members of the NCC Class.
2. Request you take a few moments of your time to complete the attached survey. I further request that surveys be returned to me at my Cube (2111), or, I am sure my fellow Air Force officers would return the survey to me if you gave it to them in your seminars.
3. Please answer the following questions:

- a. Does your Nation's Armed Forces employ a specific list of "principles of war?"

☐ YES ☐ NO

- b. If "YES," does your list include the following "principles?"

<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>Principle</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mass
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Objective
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Surprise
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Simplicity
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maneuver
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Offensive
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unity of Command
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Security
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Economy of Force

- c. If your Nation does employ a specific list of "principles," are there any principles that are not included in the above list? ☐ YES ☐ NO (Please list those principles below.)

- d. If your Nation employ's "Morale" as a Principle of War, could you please provide a brief definition of "Morale" as a principle of war?

4. Thank you for your assistance—it is greatly appreciated.

Frank J. Kisner, Lt Col, USAF, Seminar 11

APPENDIX C

International Officers Definition of Morale

Maintenance of Morale: *High morale is probably the single most important element across the spectrum of conflict, including military activities in peace. Morale fosters the will to win and to sustain offensive spirit and cohesion, withstand provocation and adversity. It can inspire throughout the rank structure. It depends on trust in the political and military leadership, right through the chain of command.*

Morale: *A subjective condition which allows the soldier to keep his willingness to fight in accordance with his core values...One of the "frictions of war" mentioned by Clausewitz.*

Maintenance of Morale: *High military morale, which instills courage, energy, determination, and a bold "can-do" spirit, will contribute to the success of an operation. The basis of military morale includes good training, discipline, and a clear understanding of and belief in the objective. It also depends, to a degree, on sound administration and public support.*

Morale: *Everything that can enhance the motivation of the military and make him more enthusiastic to accomplish his mission. It includes all the care about the military and his relatives.*

Morale: *Motivation towards courage, discipline, confidence, and willingness to endure hardship.*

Morale: *as a principle of war, according to Islam, the definition is "Obedience to God."^m*

Morale: *willingness of the sailors to commit themselves in combat for the right cause and in the appropriate circumstances, even at the risk of their own life.*

Morale: *the state of mind of the troops.*

Morale: *commitment to discipline, training, skill and will to fight for the Country, King and the Flag until the end.*

^m An additional principle cited by this same officer is "High Reward," which he expanded to define as "be a martyr."

ENDNOTES

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